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**Congress of the United States**  
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CHAIRMAN,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DOMESTIC POLICY

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND  
GOVERNMENT REFORM

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

February 25, 2010

Hon. Jolene Molitoris  
Director  
Ohio Department of Transportation  
1980 West Broad Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43223-1102

Dear Ms. Molitoris:

Thank you for your continued engagement on the many issues surrounding the proposed new Innerbelt Bridge along Interstate 90 in Downtown Cleveland. Your leadership is crucial in order to have the best bridge possible to serve the people of Cleveland, the Northeast Ohio region, and the many people who visit the area and use our local roads. I ask for your continued leadership, and flexibility as appropriate, in seeking alternatives for the new Innerbelt Bridge which would include a safe and separate multimodal route for non-motorized transportation.

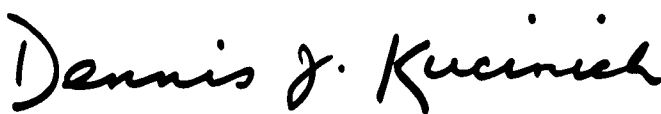
We have an opportunity to create a signature bridge which is not only functional and safe, but can be a symbol for bridging the many gaps that divide Cleveland. The most significant physical gap, of course, is the Cuyahoga River, which divides the vibrant and emerging neighborhoods of Downtown, the Warehouse District, and Gateway on the east side from Ohio City/Near West, The West Side Market, Tremont/South Side, Detroit Shoreway, and Clark-Metro on the west side. One of the ways to help bring these neighborhoods, and the people who live, work, and enjoy the amenities there together, is to provide as many safe routes for non-motorized transportation across the Cuyahoga River as possible. It is certainly not too late, in planning a bridge in which nearly a half-billion dollars will be spent, to include a safe and separate way for bikers and pedestrians to cross the river.

I understand that you have concerns about timing and not losing federal money if there would be a delay in spending our allocations on time. I also understand that safety is, and should be, the most important factor in designing and building our transportation infrastructure. Be assured that I am in close contact with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). I have preliminary assurances that it is not too late to consider bridge design alternatives that are inclusive of the many non-motorized modes of transportation. We need such alternatives for a better Downtown area and to address the problems associated with fossil fuels and global warming. The FHWA considers federal dollars, project eligibility, and safety in approving funding for major road projects such as the Innerbelt Bridge. It is my understanding that it is not too late to amend any Requests for Qualifications (RFQ) to include both a design which retains the current model

without a multimodal route, as well as a design with a safe and separate multimodal path for non-motorized travel.

Before your agency rejects out of hand a safe separate multimodal route, please make the effort to amend your RFQ to include such an alternative. For my part, be assured that I am your strongest advocate in Washington to ensure that no federal agency will stand in the way of Ohio becoming a leader in safe and efficient bridge design, which includes the many different people and modes of transportation which will help bring Cleveland together as one city. I further assure you that we stand together in advocating that safety be the primary objective for any bridge design that is ultimately chosen. I look forward to discussing this with you further at our earliest opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dennis J. Kucinich". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'D'.

Dennis J. Kucinich  
Member of Congress

DJK: mg